

## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3136

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 1144

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, SO, US

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE VISIT OF SENATOR CLARK TO BERBERA

REF: COOTE/HAMRICK LETTER DATED JULY 22

1. WHILE I WELCOME CONGRESSIONAL VISITS TO SOMALIA, I AM VERY MUCH CONCERNED AT PROSPECT OF SENATOR CLARK VISITING BERBERA DURING MONTH OF AUGUST AND EFFECT OF THIS VISIT ON FUTURE OF US/SOMALI RELATIONS, AS WELL AS INTERNATIONAL PERCEPTION OF BERBERA ISSUE. I THINK DEPT SHOULD DO EVERYTHING IN ITS POWER TO REORIENT SENATOR CLARK AND TO POINT OUT TO HIM THAT THERE IS NOTHING TO BE GAINED -- AND GREAT DEAL TO BE LOST -- BY US IN REOPENING THE BERBERA QUESTION. FOLLOWING IS DISCUSSION OF PRINCIPAL ISSUES INVOLVED.

2. FOLLOWING VISITS OF SENATOR BARTLETT AND CONGRESSMEN STRATTON AND GROUP IN EARLY '76, WE FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE SUPPORT AMBASSADOR ADDOU'S INVITATION TO SENATOR CLARK TO VISIT BERBERA TO INSPECT WHAT WAS OVERLOOKED BY FIRST TWO DELEGATIONS. WE BELIEVE APPEARANCE OF ANOTHER US SENATOR AT BERBERA WOULD SUGGEST TO MANY OBSERVERS, INCLUDING MEDIA, ARABS AND AFRICANS AS WELL, THAT US INSPECTIONS OF JULY 4 AND JULY 6 WERE INCONCLUSIVE AND US CONGRESS STILL NOT RPT NOT CERTAIN OF WHAT REALLY EXISTS AT BERBERA. WE BELIEVE ANOTHER CONGRESSIONAL INSPECTION COULD RAISE DOUBTS ABOUT BASIC CREDIBILITY OF US PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE (A POINT ARAB JOURNALISTS AND SOVIET MEDIA HAVE BEEN MAKING) WHEN IN FACT QUESTION NOW AT ISSUE IS NOT RPT NOT EXISTENCE OF  
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SOVIET FACILITIES AT BERBERA BUT POLICY FORMULATIONS USG AND

CONGRESS SHOULD MAKE AS RESULT THOSE FACILITIES. WE DO NOT RPT NOT BELIEVE ANOTHER TRIP TO BERBERA CAN SHED ANY ADDITIONAL LIGHT ON THIS QUESTION. MOREOVER, WE ASSUME THAT MILITARY AND TECHNICAL EXPERTISE WHICH ACCOMPANIED BARTLETT AND STRATTON WILL NOT RPT NOT ACCOMPANY CLARK AND, LACKING SUCH SOPHISTICATION, WE DOUBT THAT SENATOR CLARK WOULD BENEFIT EVEN MINIMALLY FROM VISIT OR -- MORE IMPORTANTLY -- THAT HE COULD BE GIVEN OPPORTUNITY BY SOMALI HOSTS TO DO SO.

3. IN LATTER RESPECT, WE NEED NOT REMIND DEPARTMENT OF GAP BETWEEN AMBASSADOR ADDOU'S ASSURANCES TO USG AND TO CONGRESS IN WASHINGTON AND SUBSEQUENT PERFORMANCE OF SOMALI GOVERNMENT IN MOGADISCIO ON NUMBER OF ISSUES, INCLUDING SHIP VISIT, BARTLETT USE OF C-130, AS WELL AS STRATTON'S BERBERA VISIT. AMBASSADOR ADDOU HAS BEEN BOTH NIMBLE AND ENERGETIC IN ATTEMPTING GET US CONGRESSMEN TO SOMALIA. WE WOULD ASSUME THAT IN THIS INSTANCE HE IS THINKING FIRST OF GETTING SENATOR CLARK TO SOMALIA, WHERE HE CAN SEE FOR HIMSELF SOMALIA'S ECONOMIC AND RESETTLEMENT PROBLEMS, BUT THINKING ONLY SECONDLY OF BERBERA AND HIS CLAIMS THAT HE CAN UNLOCK REMAINING LOCKED DOORS. WE WOULD SUPPOSE MOREOVER THAT ONCE ON THE GROUND IN SOMALIA, SENATOR CLARK'S VISIT WOULD BE LEFT TO THE VAGARIES OF CHANCE, CONFUSION, AND HIS ESCORT OFFICERS. IN SUM, WE ARE DEEPLY SKEPTICAL THAT AMBASSADOR ADDOU HAS THE POWER TO DISCLOSE FOR SENATOR CLARK AT BERBERA WHAT WAS UNDISCLOSED FOR BARTLETT AND STRATTON, EVEN IF THE MISSING PIECES ARE DEEMED RELEVANT. WE DOUBT ALSO THAT HE HAS SIAD'S APPROVAL FOR SUCH ASSURANCES. SENATOR CLARK SHOULD BE DISABUSED OF ANY FALSE EXPECTATIONS ON THESE POINTS.

4. BERBERA ALLEGATIONS AND/OR REVELATIONS HAVE DEEPLY DISTURBED AND EMBARRASSED MANY SOMALI OFFICIALS. EXTENT OF CAMPAIGN OF OFFICIAL DENIALS CARRIED BY MEDIA OVER PAST WEEKS SHOWS THAT SOMALI GOVT HAS GONE TO INORDINATE LENGTHS TO ATTEMPT TO DISPEL BERBERA ALLEGATIONS, WHICH HAVE COMPROMISED CREDIBILITY OF SIAD REGIME BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD. AT SAME TIME, US ALLEGATIONS AND MEDIA COUNTERATTACKS HAVE GIVEN SOMALI OFFICIALS WHO ARE EITHER ANTI-US OR PRO-SOVIET AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLOIT SITUATION IN MEDIA TO FURTHER DISADVANTAGE OF US. ANOTHER CYCLE OF CHARGES AND COUNTERCHARGES ABOUT BERBERA WOULD PLAY INTO THEIR HANDS AND FURTHER INJURE US/SOMALI RELATIONS.  
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5. FINALLY, WHILE I WELCOME POSSIBILITY OF SENATOR CLARK'S VISITING SOMALIA, I WOULD HOPE THAT HIS VISIT BE UNDERSTOOD IN THAT CONTEXT -- NAMELY, THAT HE HAS COME TO SEE SOMALIA, NOT RPT NOT BERBERA. IF DURING COURSE OF HIS VISIT, SOMALI GOVT OFFERS TO SHOW HIM BERBERA AS WELL, THEN HE MIGHT TAKE CASUAL ADVANTAGE OF INVITATION (IN WHICH CASE HE'LL SEE NO RPT NO MORE THAN ARAB JOURNALISTS HAVE SEEN). BUT WE BELIEVE THAT

BERBERA SHOULD NOT RPT NOT BE REGARDED AS PURPOSE OF SENATOR'S  
VISIT AND THAT PUBLICITY ATTENDING HIS DEPARTURE FROM US OR  
HIS ARRIVAL IN SOMALIA SHOULD IGNORE BERBERA QUESTION ENTIRELY. IN  
SUM, IT SHOULD BE MADE OBVIOUS TO ALL THAT THIS IS NOT RPT NOT  
HIS PURPOSE IN COMING TO SOMALIA. ONLY IN THIS WAY CAN WE  
AVOID CONTINUING DETERIORATION OF/SOMALI RELATIONS.  
LOUGHRAN

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